



Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Governor

Judith A. Monroe, M.D.
State Health Commissioner

Indiana State Department of Health

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September 12, 2008

Dear Indiana School Superintendents, Principals, and Nurses,

We have been following the discussion about the school nurse module of CHIRP (Children and Hoosiers Immunization Registry Program) on the school nurse listserv with great interest. The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) and the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) have been working for the past few years to develop this module with several goals in mind. Immunization information entered into CHIRP is accessible to school nurses and medical providers, state wide. When a child transfers to another school or graduates, the immunization record in CHIRP will follow the child to his next school or medical home. State immunization registries are evidence-based, and have been shown to improve immunization rates while preventing over-immunization. This benefits communities and schools because high immunization rates prevent outbreaks of diseases such as chickenpox, mumps, and measles, keeping our children healthy and in school. ISDH is responsible for reporting school immunization data to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on an annual basis. The School Nurse CHIRP module will facilitate this process by providing us with on-line access to aggregate immunization numbers from each school. Using CHIRP will eliminate the need for schools to actively submit reports to ISDH.

While we believe that CHIRP is a great product, we have heard the concerns many of you have voiced on the listserv or over the phone, including the lack of adequate communication and training, and duplication of data entry. We would like to work with you to resolve these issues, but understand that this will be a time-consuming process and many of you don't have the resources to input data into CHIRP. As you have all championed, your first responsibility is to care for the students in your schools. Thus, we realize that we cannot, in good faith, mandate the use of CHIRP for immunization reporting at this time.

For those of you who have begun this process, we appreciate your efforts and would like to encourage your continued use of CHIRP for recording and reporting immunizations. We hope that others of you will begin to enter your school immunization data into CHIRP as time allows. For those of you who would like to submit paper copies of your immunization numbers, the forms and instructions for reporting will be available on the CHIRP website in the documents section. DOE will also provide a link to these documents from their website. The deadline for paper reporting to ISDH is November 1, 2008. If you are using CHIRP, your deadline will remain December 15, 2008. We will continue to provide training, answer questions, and smooth out the communication and programmatic wrinkles with your help. We are all working toward the same goal - healthy, happy, and well-educated children. We look forward to our continued work together.

Sincerely,

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